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ABSTRACT

This report provides detailed information about crimes committed against Hispanics from 1979 to 1986 based on the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Crime Survey (NCS). The rate of violent crime committed against Hispanics each year surveyed is examined and compared to that for non-Hispanics. The demographic characteristics of the Hispanic population, based on the NCS, are presented. The following characteristics of Hispanic and non-Hispanic victims are described: (1) education; (2) occupation; (3) home ownership; and (4) location of household. Based on this information, and given the higher representation of Hispanics in high-crime-risk categories, when Hispanic and non-Hispanic victims with the same characteristics are compared, the Hispanics' higher overall rate of criminal victimization often disappears. An analysis of the following aspects of crime against Hispanics is presented: (1) place where violent crimes occurred; (2) who committed them; (3) outcomes of violent crimes; and (4) whether they were single-offender or multiple-offender victimizations. The major finding from this analysis is that, compared to other groups, Hispanics are victimized particularly by robbery. A discussion of the methodology used by the NCS to collect data is included. Data are presented on 18 tables. A list of Bureau of Justice publications, available free to the public, is appended. (JS)

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Hispanic Victims

By Lisa D. Bastian
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From 1979 to 1986 the more than 18 million Hispanics in the United States suffered an average each year of 439,000 violent crimes (rapes, robberies, and assaults) and 830,000 personal thefts. In addition, households headed by a Hispanic had an annual average of 1.2 million burglaries, household thefts, or motor vehicle thefts.

These data come from the Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Crime Survey (NCS), an ongoing survey of approximately 100,000 persons age 12 or older, interviewed twice a year in about 50,000 households. Other findings about Hispanic victims include the following:

• For the entire 1979-86 period, Hispanics experienced higher rates of victimization from violent crime than did non-Hispanics. For every 1,000 Hispanics age 12 or older, there were 11 robberies and 12 aggravated assaults; for every 1,000 non-Hispanics, there were 6 robberies and 10 aggravated assaults.

• The annual rate of violent crime committed against Hispanics dropped after 1983 from about 44 crimes per 1,000 to about 31 per 1,000 in 1985.

• Hispanics suffered a higher rate of household crimes — burglary, household larceny, and motor vehicle theft — than did non-Hispanics. For the whole period there was an annual average of 266 household victimizations per 1,000 households headed by a Hispanic, compared to 205 crimes per 1,000 non-Hispanic households.

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Hispanics comprise the fastest growing ethnic or racial group in the United States. The National Crime Survey, the Nation's second largest ongoing household survey, sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, provides detailed information on how crime affects this important segment of our society. This report updates a BJS study of Hispanic victims published in 1981.

Perhaps the major finding of this analysis of NCS data for 1979-86 is that compared to other groups Hispanics are victimized particularly by robbery. The report presents a variety of findings on this and other crimes that Hispanics suffer.

Joseph M. Bessette
Acting Director

• The higher victimization rate for Hispanics can be partly explained by their being more likely than the rest of the population to have characteristics associated with high crime rates. For example, Hispanics tend to be younger, poorer, and more concentrated in cities than non-Hispanics; however, even when these differences are controlled for, Hispanics still had higher robbery victimization rates.

• The street was the most common place for violent crimes to occur. Forty-five percent of the robberies of Hispanics, 51% of the robberies of black victims, and 34% of the robberies of whites were on the street.

Hispanic victimization: Overview, 1979-86

	Average annual number
Crimes of violence	438,639
Crimes of theft	829,865
Household crimes	1,172,225
Weapons in violent crime victimizations	
Victimizations involving a weapon	199,177
Robberies with a knife	29,369
Robberies with a gun	22,384
Injuries in violent attacks*	
Serious	23,750
Minor	105,896
Reporting victimizations to the police (all crimes)	
Victimizations reported	837,026
Victimizations not reported	1,579,186
Crimes of violence	
Victimizations reported	211,063
Victimizations not reported	224,599
Number of offenders in violent crime victimizations	
Victimizations involving a single offender	253,076
Victimizations involving two or more offenders	178,168
Robberies	71,206
Aggravated assaults	53,829

*Figures exclude rape injuries and those victimizations in which the presence of injury was not ascertained. Victimizations were classified according to the most serious injury received.

• Hispanic victims of violent crime were more likely to be accosted by a stranger (65%) than were white victims (58%) or black victims (54%). Conversely, Hispanic victims were the least likely (12%), and blacks, the most likely (22%) to be accosted by someone well known to them.

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• Overall, Hispanics were about as likely as whites and blacks to report a victimization to the police.

• Hispanic and black robbery victims were more likely to face an offender with a weapon (57% of each group) than whites (43%). Black robbery victims were the most likely to be confronted by an offender with a gun (29%), and Hispanics were the most likely to face a robber with a knife (25%).

Hispanics in the United States

Hispanics comprise about 8% of the total U.S. population. The Hispanic population is concentrated in nine States — California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, Arizona, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Colorado. Nearly three-fourths of Hispanics live in the South or the West.

Immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries accounted for about a third of all newcomers to the United States from 1961 to 1987. In 1988 persons who traced their heritage to Mexico comprised 62% of all Hispanics in the United States. Those with a Puerto Rican heritage were 13% of the U.S. Hispanic population; Central and South Americans, 12%; Cuban Americans, 5%; and other Hispanics, including persons descended from early Spanish colonists, 6%.

This report, based upon household interviews conducted for the NCS from 1979 to 1986, discusses characteristics of the Hispanic population in the United States in terms of criminal victimization. It examines the major crimes that Hispanics have sustained, the nature of crime situations, and how the victims responded to crime.

As used in this report, the term "Hispanic" is an ethnic category that can include persons of any race. In discussions where the non-Hispanic category has been broken down by race, members of the resulting categories are referred to as whites and blacks rather than white non-Hispanics and black non-Hispanics. Asians, Native Americans, or members of any other races have been excluded from these breakdowns (see *Methodology*).

Hispanics in the United States, March 1988

State of residence	
Total	100%
California	34
Texas	21
New York	11
Florida	6
Illinois	4
Arizona	3
New Jersey	3
New Mexico	3
Colorado	2
Other States	11
Nation of origin	
Total	100%
Mexico	62
Puerto Rico	13
Cuba	5
Central and South America	12
Other Hispanic	8
Unemployment rate[a]	9%
Educational attainment[b]	
Less than 5 years of school	12%
Four years of high school or more	51
Four years of college or more	10
Size of family	
Total	100%
Two persons	26
Three persons	24
Four persons	25
Five persons	14
Six persons	7
Seven or more persons	5

Source: *The Hispanic population in the United States: March 1988* (Current Population Reports). Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

[a]Figures are based on the total Hispanic population 16 years old or older.

[b]Figures are based on the total Hispanic population 25 years old or older.

Trends in crime rates

From 1979 to 1983 the annual average rate of violent crime committed against Hispanics age 12 or older was about 44 per 1,000; this rate began to decline in 1984 (table 1). In 1985 the rate dropped significantly, to 31 violent crimes per 1,000, and remained near this level through 1986. (Because the numbers in this report are estimates based on a sample, some apparent differences may reflect sampling variation. Any difference described reflects at least a 90% certainty that the difference is not the result of sampling variation. See *Methodology* for further discussion of reporting of significant differences.)

During this period the rate of violent crime committed against non-Hispanics fluctuated. The rate per 1,000 non-Hispanics age 12 or older dropped from 38 violent victimizations in 1979 to 36 in 1980 but rose again to about 39 in the year following. In 1983, a year earlier than the beginning of the decline in the violent crime rate for Hispanics, the rate for non-Hispanics dropped significantly and then declined slowly through 1986.

For Hispanics a fall in the rate of personal theft preceded the decline in the violent crime rate. The rate went down significantly in 1984 to 66 thefts per 1,000 Hispanics and remained near this level in 1985 and 1986. The personal theft rate for non-Hispanics dropped in several

Table 1. Victimization rates for personal and household crimes, by ethnicity, 1979-86

	Victimization rates per 1,000 persons age 12 or older or per 1,000 households							
	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Hispanics								
Crimes of violence	44	45	43	45	43	39	31	29
Crimes of theft	84	78	88	88	74	66	61	66
Household crimes	299	278	291	279	253	262	240	237
Non-Hispanics								
Crimes of violence	38	36	39	38	34	34	32	31
Crimes of theft	95	85	87	84	79	74	71	69
Household crimes	242	233	231	213	194	181	177	172

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significant steps from 95 thefts per 1,000 in 1979. The level fell, first in 1980, then again in 1982, 1983, and 1984, declining to a low of 69 thefts per 1,000 in 1986.

In contrast to the personal crime victimization rates for Hispanics, the rates of household crime fluctuated, declining significantly in 1983, increasing slightly in 1984, and then dropping to a new low in 1985. In 1985 for every 1,000 households headed by a Hispanic, there were 240 burglaries, stolen vehicles, or household thefts. The rate of household crimes against non-Hispanic households declined from 242 crimes per 1,000 households in 1979 to a low of 172 per 1,000 in 1986.

Crime victimization rates for Hispanics and non-Hispanics

For the period 1979-86 Hispanics experienced higher violent crime rates than did non-Hispanics (table 2). Relative to their number, Hispanics were robbed or seriously assaulted more often than other persons. For every 1,000 persons age 12 or older, there were 11 robberies of Hispanics, compared to 6 of non-Hispanics. The 12 aggravated assaults per 1,000 Hispanics exceeded the rate of 10 assaults per 1,000 non-Hispanics.

Aggravated assaults involve either a weapon or a serious injury like broken bones, teeth knocked out, loss of consciousness, or an unknown injury requiring 2 or more days in the hospital. For the less serious simple assaults, the Hispanics' victimization rate did not differ from that of non-Hispanics. Nor did Hispanics and non-Hispanics differ significantly in their rate of victimization by rape.

Hispanics from 1979 to 1986 had higher rates of victimization than non-Hispanics for household crimes: 266 household crimes per 1,000 households headed by a Hispanic versus 205 crimes per 1,000 non-Hispanic households. The rate of burglary was a fifth larger for Hispanic households than for non-Hispanic households. For every 1,000 Hispanic households there were 144 larceny thefts and 26 thefts of vehicles, while for every 1,000 non-Hispanic households there were 114 larcenies and 15 motor vehicle thefts.

Demographic characteristics of the Hispanic population in the NCS

During the 1979-86 period, 36% of the Hispanic population estimated by the NCS, compared to 26% of non-Hispanics, were older than age 11 and younger than age 25 (table 3). A fifth of the Hispanics, but nearly a third of the non-Hispanics, were age 50 or older.

Hispanics and non-Hispanics were concentrated in different categories of marital status and education. A higher percentage of Hispanics than non-Hispanics had never married (36% versus 29%). Less than half of all Hispanics had completed high school, compared to two-thirds of the non-Hispanics. Seventeen percent of Hispanics and 31% of non-Hispanics had attended at least 1 year of college.

About a third of non-Hispanic individuals had annual family incomes under $15,000, but half of the Hispanics were at that level. About 17% of Hispanics and 31% of non-Hispanics were at the other end of the scale, belonging to families earning $25,000 or more.

Table 2. Victimization rate, by type of crime and ethnicity, 1979-86

Type of crime	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
Crimes of violence	39.6	35.3
Rape	1.0	1.0
Robbery	10.5	6.1
Aggravated assault	12.0	9.7
Simple assault	16.3	18.6
Crimes of theft	74.9	80.3
Personal larceny with contact	5.1	2.9
Personal larceny without contact	69.8	77.4
Household crimes	265.6	204.5
Burglary	95.4	75.3
Household larceny	143.9	113.8
Motor vehicle theft	26.2	15.4

Note: Characteristics of the victim are used for crimes of violence and theft; characteristics of the head of household are used for household crimes. Victimization rates are average annual victimization rates per 1,000 persons or households.

Unemployed Hispanics accounted for 10% of the Hispanic population who belonged to the labor force; 7% of the non-Hispanics who worked for gain were unemployed. Thirty-four percent of Hispanics and 36% of non-Hispanics did not participate in the labor force; they were students, homemakers, retirees, persons unable to work for gain, or other nonparticipants.

Table 3. Selected demographic characteristics of Hispanic and non-Hispanic NCS respondents, 1979-86

Demographic characteristics	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
Sex		
Total	100%	100%
Male	48	48
Female	52	52
Age		
Total	100%	100%
12-15	11	7
16-19	11	8
20-24	14	11
25-34	24	21
35-49	22	21
50-64	13	18
65+	6	14
Marital status*		
Total	100%	100%
Married	52	56
Widowed	4	7
Divorced or separated	9	8
Never married	36	29
Family income		
Total	100%	100%
Less than $7,500	23	15
$7,500-14,999	27	19
$15,000-24,999	23	23
$25,000-49,999	14	24
$50,000 or more	3	7
Not ascertained	10	11
Education		
Total	100%	100%
0-8 years	38	17
9-11 years	20	16
12 years	25	35
1-3 years of college	11	16
4 or more years of college	6	15
Not ascertained	1	1
Occupation		
Total	100%	100%
Labor force		
Employed	59	61
Unemployed	7	5
Non-labor force		
Homemakers	20	19
Students	5	4
Persons unable to work	2	2
Retirees	3	7
Other	4	4

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding. Percentages are average annual percentages.
*The category "marital status not ascertained" is not displayed.

Less than half of the Hispanic households owned their homes; 57% rented. Two-thirds of non-Hispanic heads of households were home owners.

More than 1 of every 2 Hispanic households were located in a central city, compared to fewer than 1 in 3 non-Hispanic households (table 4). While 14% of Hispanic households were located in nonmetropolitan areas, 31% of non-Hispanic households were outside cities and their suburbs.

The relationship between persons having certain demographic characteristics and their likelihood of falling victim to crime has been shown in research by BJS and others.[1] For each characteristic discussed above, Hispanics were concentrated in those categories associated with higher crime rates. Compared to non-Hispanics, a larger percentage of Hispanics were —

- younger and less likely to be over age 50
- unmarried
- less well educated
- earning a low income
- nonprofessional, with a higher unemployment rate
- renters rather than owners
- city dwellers instead of suburbanites or residents of nonmetropolitan areas.

Given the higher representation of Hispanics in high-crime-risk categories, when Hispanic and non-Hispanic victims with the same characteristics are compared, the Hispanics' higher overall rate of criminal victimization often disappears.

[1] *The risk of violent crime*, BJS Special Report, NCJ-97119, May 1985.

Detailed examination of selected characteristics of Hispanic and non-Hispanic victims

For most crimes Hispanic and non-Hispanic individuals sharing the same demographic characteristics had generally comparable victimization rates, except for robbery and, to a lesser extent, aggravated assault. Some support for and exceptions to this generalization can be found in an analysis of criminal victimization while taking into account education, employment, home ownership, and place of residence.

Education

Hispanics more often fell victim to robbery than did non-Hispanics, regardless of the victims' educational background (table 5). Among persons with less than a ninth-grade education, non-Hispanics suffered a higher rate of simple assault than Hispanics.

Table 4. Selected characteristics of Hispanic and non-Hispanic NCS households, 1979-86

Household characteristics	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
Home ownership		
Total	100%	100%
Own	43	65
Rent	57	35
Location of residence		
Total	100%	100%
Central city	51	29
Suburban	35	40
Nonmetropolitan	14	31
Family income		
Total	100%	100%
Less than $7,500	28	20
$7,500-14,999	27	21
$15,000-24,999	21	22
$25,000-49,999	12	21
$50,000 or more	2	5
Not ascertained	10	11

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding. Percentages are average annual percentages.

Table 5. Victimization rate, by type of crime, ethnicity, and educational attainment, 1979-86

	Average annual rate of victimization per 1,000 persons				
		High school		College	
Type of crime and ethnicity	Elementary school 0-8 years	9-11 years	12 years	1-3 years	4 or more years
Crimes of violence*					
Hispanic	31.7	53.6	37.1	53.8	30.5
Non-Hispanic	32.7	45.1	31.7	43.6	27.7
Robbery					
Hispanic	11.0	12.4	8.9	12.1	5.6
Non-Hispanic	6.8	8.0	5.4	6.4	4.5
Aggravated assault					
Hispanic	7.8	18.1	12.7	15.6	9.4
Non-Hispanic	7.5	13.6	9.4	12.0	6.4
Simple assault					
Hispanic	12.3	21.9	15.0	24.7	15.3
Non-Hispanic	17.6	22.2	16.1	23.9	16.3
Crimes of theft					
Hispanic	52.6	81.6	81.2	111.1	104.7
Non-Hispanic	63.9	80.4	70.0	103.0	99.1
Personal larceny with contact					
Hispanic	5.3	4.8	4.9	5.5	4.1
Non-Hispanic	2.8	2.8	2.5	3.2	3.4
Personal larceny without contact					
Hispanic	47.3	76.8	76.3	105.6	100.7
Non-Hispanic	61.1	77.6	67.5	99.8	95.8

Note: Victimization rates are average annual victimization rates per 1,000 persons. Levels of educational attainment refer to the highest grade completed. The category "educational attainment not ascertained" is not displayed.
*Include data on rape not shown as a separate category.

Occupation

Only Hispanics and non-Hispanics not in the labor force differed significantly in their rates of victimization for certain crimes (table 6). Of persons not in the labor force, for every 1,000 Hispanics there were 29 violent crimes; for non-Hispanics, 20 violent crimes. Hispanic homemakers were nearly twice as likely to have experienced violent crimes as non-Hispanic homemakers. Non-Hispanic students with a rate of 123 per 1,000 persons experienced significantly more thefts than Hispanic students (86 per 1,000).

Home ownership

Among those families who owned or were buying a home, Hispanics had higher rates of all household crimes than non-Hispanics (table 7.) For example, the Hispanics' rate of motor vehicle theft was about twice that that of non-Hispanic residence owners. Hispanics, whether owners or renters, were robbed relatively more often than non-Hispanics.

Location of household

Hispanic households in nonmetropolitan areas, suburbs, and central cities were victimized more often than non-Hispanic households (table 8). Hispanic households in central cities lost motor vehicles to theft at a significantly higher rate than non-Hispanic households (29 versus 24 per 1,000 households). In the suburbs, Hispanics, compared to non-Hispanics, had higher rates of households larcency and motor vehicle theft, while in the nonmetropolitan areas, households headed by Hispanics experienced burglary and larceny at rates higher than those of non-Hispanic households.

In central cities and suburbs, Hispanics were robbed more often than non-Hispanics, while non-Hispanics were more often the victims of personal theft.

Table 6. Victimization rate, by type of crime, ethnicity, and employment status, 1979-84

Employment status	Average annual rate of victimization per 1,000 persons: Crimes of violence		Crimes of theft	
	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
Labor force	46.0	42.4	89.4	96.1
Employed	43.8	39.3	88.6	95.1
Private sector	44.0	37.5	86.2	94.7
Government	42.9	48.5	104.0	97.2
Unemployed	84.8	84.1	97.1	108.2
Non-labor force	29.4	19.8	51.3	47.4
Homemakers	26.5	14.3	48.3	40.2
Students	40.5	52.9	86.1	123.1
Persons unable to work	29.5	22.9	27.0	26.5
Retirees	18.1	8.0	33.2	23.4

Note: Victimization rates are average annual victimization rates per 1,000 persons.

Table 7. Annual rate of victimization, by type of crime, ethnicity, and home ownership, 1979-86

Type of crime and ethnicity	Households that: Owned	Rented
Crimes of violence*		
Hispanic	28.4	50.5
Non-Hispanic	23.8	63.2
Robbery		
Hispanic	5.6	15.4
Non-Hispanic	3.5	12.4
Aggravated assault		
Hispanic	9.2	14.7
Non-Hispanic	6.5	17.6
Simple assault		
Hispanic	13.3	19.2
Non-Hispanic	13.4	31.2
Crimes of theft		
Hispanic	89.6	80.0
Non-Hispanic	67.1	112.3
Personal larceny with contact		
Hispanic	3.2	7.0
Non-Hispanic	1.8	5.4
Personal larceny without contact		
Hispanic	66.5	73.0
Non-Hispanic	65.3	106.9
Household crimes		
Hispanic	243.4	282.1
Non-Hispanic	171.0	266.9
Burglary		
Hispanic	78.9	107.8
Non-Hispanic	60.7	102.6
Household larceny		
Hispanic	140.1	146.7
Non-Hispanic	98.4	142.4
Motor vehicle theft		
Hispanic	24.3	27.7
Non-Hispanic	12.0	21.9

Note: Characteristics of the victim are used for crimes of violence and theft; characteristics of the head of household are used for household crimes. Victimization rates are average annual victimization rates per 1,000 persons or households.
*Include data on rape not shown as a separate category.

Table 8. Victimization rate, by type of crime, ethnicity, and location of residence, 1979-86

Type of crime and ethnicity	Average annual crime rate of persons or households in: Central city	Suburbs	Nonmetropolitan area
Crimes of violence*			
Hispanic	45.7	34.1	32.3
Non-Hispanic	48.5	33.9	28.0
Robbery			
Hispanic	14.8	7.5	3.4
Non-Hispanic	11.7	5.0	2.7
Aggravated assault			
Hispanic	12.9	10.6	12.2
Non-Hispanic	13.1	9.1	7.7
Simple assault			
Hispanic	17.0	15.5	16.0
Non-Hispanic	22.2	19.0	14.9
Crimes of theft			
Hispanic	78.1	75.6	62.1
Non-Hispanic	96.7	85.9	59.2
Personal larceny with contact			
Hispanic	7.5	3.3	1.0
Non-Hispanic	6.1	2.2	1.1
Personal larceny without contact			
Hispanic	70.5	72.3	61.1
Non-Hispanic	90.6	83.7	58.2
Household crimes			
Hispanic	277.0	259.1	239.8
Non-Hispanic	263.7	196.3	160.5
Burglary			
Hispanic	104.1	87.2	84.4
Non-Hispanic	99.3	68.8	61.6
Household larceny			
Hispanic	143.7	144.3	143.7
Non-Hispanic	140.8	112.0	91.2
Motor vehicle theft			
Hispanic	29.3	27.7	11.7
Non-Hispanic	23.6	15.6	7.7

Note: Characteristics of the victim are used for crimes of violence and theft; characteristics of the head of household are used for household crimes. Victimization rates are average annual victimization rates per 1,000 persons or households.
*Include data on rape not shown as a separate category.

Where violent crimes occurred and who committed them

All types of violent crime most often occurred on the street (table 9). Robberies of Hispanics or blacks, especially, were more likely to take place on the street (45% of Hispanic robbery victims, 51% of black victims, and 34% of white victims). Simple or aggravated assaults were about as likely to occur on the street for the three groups.

Larger percentages of the aggravated assaults on Hispanics (18%) and on blacks (14%) than on whites (10%) occurred near the victims' homes. Hispanic and white victims of aggravated assaults experienced about the same percentage of assaults in their homes (10% and 11%). A larger percentage of simple assaults on black victims, compared to those on Hispanics or whites, took place at home.

Most victims of violent crime did not know the offender (table 10). Hispanics, in particular, fell victim to strangers (65% of Hispanics, compared to 58% of whites and 54% of blacks). As already noted, Hispanics had a relatively high rate of victimization by robbery, primarily a stranger-to-stranger crime.[8] Strangers (according to survey results not reported in a table) committed 87% of the robberies against Hispanics. Conversely, Hispanics were the least likely, and blacks, the most likely, to have been victimized by an offender well known to them.

[8] *Violent crime by strangers and nonstrangers*, BJS Special Report, NCJ-103702, January 1987.

Table 9. Place where violent crime occurred, 1979-86

Type of crime and race or ethnicity of victim	The percent of violent crime that took place: Total	On the street[a]	Near home[b]	At home[c]	In a parking lot	In school	On public transportation	Elsewhere or not ascertained
Crimes of violence[d]								
Hispanic	100%	30%	15%	12%	7%	8%	2%	27%
White	100	24	10	12	9	9	1	34
Black	100	35	14	15	5	6	2	23
Robbery								
Hispanic	100	45	12	9	9	3	5	17
White	100	34	9	14	12	6	3	22
Black	100	51	12	11	6	4	2	14
Aggravated assault								
Hispanic	100	26	18	10	8	5	1	32
White	100	26	10	11	10	5	1	37
Black	100	30	14	14	6	4	1	30
Simple assault								
Hispanic	100	24	14	13	5	13	1	30
White	100	21	10	12	8	12	1	36
Black	100	26	15	19	4	11	2	24

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

[a]"On the street" is defined as on the street other than immediately adjacent to one's own home or to a friend's, relative's, or neighbor's home.

[b]"Near home" is defined as being near one's own home, yard, sidewalk, driveway, carport or on a street immediately adjacent to one's own home, apartment, storage area, or laundry room.

[c]"At home" is defined as being at or in one's own dwelling or attached garage or being at or in a detached building on one's own property.

[d]Include data on rape not shown as a separate category.

Table 10. Victim-offender relationship in violent crime victimizations, 1979-86

Victim-offender relationship	Crimes of violence: Hispanic	White	Black
Total	100%	100%	100%
Nonstranger			
Total	32%	38%	42%
Spouse	2	3	2
Ex-spouse	2	2	1
Parent	-- *	1	--
Child	-- *	--	--
Other relative	3	2	2
Casual acquaintance	12	13	14
Well known	12	17	22
Stranger	65%	58%	54%
Relationship not known or not ascertained	4%	4%	5%

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.
--Less than 0.5%.
*Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases; see *Methodology*.

About half of Hispanic and black victims of violent crime faced armed offenders (45% and 49%, respectively), compared to about a third of whites (32%) (table 11). For robbery, 57% of Hispanics and blacks faced an armed offender, compared to 43% of whites. Black robbery victims were the most likely to be confronted by an offender with a gun (29%), and Hispanics were most likely to face an offender with a knife (25%).

Table 11. Presence and type of weapons in violent crimes, 1979-86

Type of crime, presence and type of weapon	Hispanic	White	Black
Crimes of violence[a]			
Total	100%	100%	100%
No weapon	48	61	42
Weapon	45	32	49
Gun	15	10	20
Knife	15	8	14
Other	13	12	13
Weapon type unknown	2	2	2
Not known or not ascertained if armed	7	7	10
Robbery			
Total	100%	100%	100%
No weapon	33	44	30
Weapon	57	43	57
Gun	19	16	29
Knife	25	15	16
Other	11	10	10
Weapon type unknown	2	2	2
Not known or not ascertained if armed	9	11	12
Aggravated assault[b]			
Total	100%	100%	100%
No weapon	3	6	3
Weapon	97	94	97
Gun	32	29	36
Knife	27	22	27
Other	34	39	30
Weapon type unknown	4	4	3
Not known or not ascertained if armed[c]	--	--	1

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding. Although some respondents may have reported more than one weapon present, victimizations have been classified according to a hierarchy of weapons use: any gun present, any knife present, other weapon present but type not ascertained, no weapon, and not known or not ascertained if weapon present.
--Less than 0.5%.
[a]Include data on rape and simple assault not shown as separate categories.
[b]Involves attack with a weapon or attack without a weapon which results in serious injury.
[c]Estimates for Hispanics and blacks are based on 10 or fewer sample cases; see *Methodology*.

Like black victims, about a third of the Hispanics were robbed by a person having no weapon. Robbers of whites had no weapon 44% of the time.

Outcomes from violent crime

Hispanic, white, and black victims who were attacked sustained injuries of similar severity (table 12). When robbed and attacked, whites were more likely to be injured than blacks (64% versus 56%). No significant differences distinguished the racial or ethnic groups in the percentages of attacks resulting in serious injury.

Although whites were injured more often than blacks or Hispanics in an attack during a robbery, for all violent crimes resulting in injury, black victims more frequently

Table 12. Presence and severity of injuries received in violent attacks, 1979-86

Type of crime and injury	Percent of attacks on victims who were:- Hispanic	White	Black
Crimes of violence[a]			
Total	100%	100%	100%
No injury	39	37	38
Injury	61	63	62
Serious	11	10	15
Minor	50	53	47
Robbery			
Total	100	100	100
No injury	41	36	44
Injury	59	64	56
Serious	12	14	13
Minor	47	50	42
Aggravated assault[b]			
Total	100	100	100
No injury	27	23	22
Injury	73	77	78
Serious	27	30	33
Minor	46	48	45

Note: Subgroup percentages may not total to the overall category because of rounding. Figures exclude rape injuries, those victimizations in which the presence of injury was not ascertained, and violent victimizations involving threats but not attacks. Although some respondents may have reported more than one type of injury, victimizations have been classified according to the most serious injury received. Serious injury includes knife, gunshot, or bullet wounds; broken bones and teeth; internal injuries; being knocked unconscious; or other injuries requiring 2 or more days of hospitalization. Minor injuries include bruises, cuts, scratches, black eyes, swelling, or other injuries requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization.
[a]Include data on rape and simple assault not shown as separate categories.
[b]Involves attack with a weapon or attack without a weapon which results in serious injury.

received some type of medical care (table 13). Hispanics were no more or less likely than blacks or whites to receive medical attention, to receive care in an emergency room or hospital, or to stay overnight in a hospital.

Crimes against Hispanic, black, and white victims were reported to the police with

Table 13. Presence and type of medical care received by victims of violent crime, 1979-86

Type of crime and medical care	Percent of injuries Hispanic	White	Black
Crimes of violence[a]			
Total	100%	100%	100%
No care received	49	54	39
Medical care received	51	46	61
Outside an emergency room or hospital	23	25	24
In an emergency room or hospital	28	23	37
Did not stay overnight	22	20	29
Stayed overnight	7	3	9
Robbery			
Total	100%	100%	100%
No care received	53	52	42
Medical care received	47	48	58
Outside an emergency room or hospital	20	22	25
In an emergency room or hospital	27	26	33
Did not stay overnight	21	20	28
Stayed overnight	7	5	5
Aggravated assault[b]			
Total	100%	100%	100%
No care received	33	40	25
Medical care received	67	60	75
Outside an emergency room or hospital	25	23	23
In an emergency room or hospital	43	37	52
Did not stay overnight	29	30	35
Stayed overnight	13	7	17

Note: Subgroup percentages may not total to the overall category because of rounding. Although some respondents may have reported more than one type of medical treatment, victimizations have been classified according to a hierarchy based upon the most intensive treatment received.
[a]Include data on rape and simple assault not shown as separate categories.
[b]Involves attack with a weapon or attack without a weapon which results in serious injury. Thus, a large share of aggravated assaults result in some type of medical care being received.

similar frequency (table 14). Crimes most often reported were crimes of violence; victims of all racial or ethnic groups reported about half the violent victimizations. About a quarter of all personal thefts were reported to the police. Motor vehicle thefts were reported by each group in the largest proportions.

Although relative to their population Hispanics were robbed more often than non-Hispanics, those robberies were reported to the police less frequently than robberies of either blacks or whites. Hispanics reported 47% of the robberies, compared to 57% for whites and 55% for blacks.

When violent crimes were not reported to the police, the victims most often gave as a reason that the crime was a private matter or that they considered it inconsequential (table 15). Fear of reprisal was least frequently given as a reason for not reporting these crimes.

Robbery victims most often cited lack of proof as the reason for not reporting a victimization to the police. Whites more than Hispanics or blacks failed to report robberies because they felt these victimizations were private matters (20% of whites who had not reported, 9% of Hispanics, and 15% of blacks). Similarly, 17% of white robbery victims who had not reported to the authorities said that the incident was not important enough, compared to 12% of Hispanics and 13% of blacks.

Among nonreporting black and Hispanic victims of robbery, personal theft, and household crimes, comparatively similar percentages said that they did not call the police because they felt that the police would think the incident unimportant or would do little to respond.

Table 14. Victimizations reported to the police, 1979-86

Type of crime	Percent of victimizations reported when victims were: Hispanic	White	Black
Crimes of violence	48%	48%	52%
Rape	50	51	57
Robbery	47	57	55
Aggravated assault	62	57	59
Simple assault	38	41	43
Crimes of theft	24	27	24
Personal larceny			
With contact	31	37	35
Without contact	24	27	24
Household crimes	36	38	40
Burglary	48	49	52
Household larceny	23	27	23
Motor vehicle theft	67	69	75

Single-offender versus multiple-offender victimizations

During the 1980's gang activity appears to have increased, contributing to the street violence that exists in many central city neighborhoods. In some Hispanic communities, a majority of the male youth may at some time belong to a gang.[3]

The NCS does not gather data on the offenders' ethnicity or on gang violence as a separate category. It does, however, measure victimizations involving multiple offenders, which may represent the impact of gang activity.

Of the violent crimes, robbery most frequently involved multiple offenders, and Hispanics, as noted earlier, were more likely than blacks or whites to be robbed (table 16). Offenders in groups committed

[3]Ruth Horowitz, "Community tolerance of gang violence," *Social Problems*, 34:5 (1987), pp. 439-48.

Table 15. Reasons for not reporting victimizations to the police, 1979-86

Type of crime and race or ethnicity of victim	Private matter	Not important enough to respondent	Lack of proof	Not important enough to police	Police would not do anything[a]	Fear of reprisal	Reported crime to someone else	Other and not known
Crimes of violence[b]								
Hispanic	22%	20%	12%	11%	8%	7%	10%	29%
White	31	23	8	7	5	5	13	24
Black	26	20	11	10	8	4	11	26
Robbery								
Hispanic	9	12	21	12	14	8	6	42
White	20	17	18	9	9	6	9	36
Black	15	13	20	13	14	5	7	38
Aggravated assault								
Hispanic	29	18	9	12	9	9	8	27
White	33	19	9	7	5	6	10	27
Black	30	20	9	9	8	5	10	23
Simple assault								
Hispanic	26	26	8	10	5	5	14	22
White	33	26	5	7	3	5	14	21
Black	30	25	7	8	4	3	14	20
Crimes of theft								
Hispanic	3%	27%	20%	10%	4%	1%	20%	37%
White	4	32	21	7	3	--	21	35
Black	5	24	22	9	4	--	21	34
Household crimes								
Hispanic	6%	28%	19%	12%	8%	1%	4%	42%
White	8	33	22	10	5	1	4	39
Black	9	25	22	12	7	1	5	42

Note: Some respondents may have cited more than one reason for not reporting victimizations to the police. Therefore, detail will not total 100%.
--Less than 0.5%.
[a]Includes reasons given by respondents such as: the police would be inefficient, ineffective, or insensitive.
[b]Include data on rape not shown as a separate category.

Table 16. Number of offenders in violent crime victimizations, 1979-86

Type of crime and number of offenders	Hispanic	White	Black
Crimes of violence			
Total	100%	100%	100%
Single offender	58	72	66
Two or more offenders	41	26	33
Not known or not available	2	2	1
Rape			
Total	100%	100%	100%
Single offender	86	84	80
Two or more offenders	14 *	15	18
Not known or not available	0	1	2
Robbery			
Total	100%	100%	100%
Single offender	39	53	45
Two or more offenders	61	45	54
Not known or not available	-- *	2	1
Aggravated assault			
Total	100%	100%	100%
Single offender	56	68	72
Two or more offenders	41	28	26
Not known or not available	3	3	2
Simple assault			
Total	100%	100%	100%
Single offender	70	78	75
Two or more offenders	29	21	23
Not known or not available	2	1	1

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.
--Less than 0.5%.
*Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases; see *Methodology*.

61% of the robberies of Hispanics, 54% of the robberies of blacks, and 45% of the robberies of whites. For aggravated assault as well as robbery, Hispanics relatively more often than whites or blacks fell victim to multiple offenders: 41% of the aggravated assaults against Hispanics, 28% against whites, and 26% against blacks. For simple assault by two or more persons, Hispanics and blacks did not significantly differ. There was some evidence, however, that a higher proportion of simple assaults by multiple offenders were against Hispanics than against whites.

Violent criminals were usually under age 30, but multiple-offender victimizations were particularly likely to involve very young offenders. Offenders under age 21 predominated in multiple-offender victimizations, except for aggravated assault (table 17). In multiple-offender victimizations, no ethnic or racial group was more likely to be victimized by offenders of any particular age.

Violent offenders and their victims tended to be similar in age. Black and white victims in each age range were confronted most frequently by an offender or offenders in the same category (table 18). This association also occurred for Hispanic victims up to the age of 29. However, Hispanics age 30 or older were about as likely to be victimized by an offender or offenders in their twenties (27%) as by offenders age 30 or older.

Table 17. Number and age of offenders in violent crime victimizations, 1979-86

Type of crime, number of offenders, and race or ethnicity of victim	Perceived age of offenders: Total	Under 21	21-29	30 or over	Mixed ages	Not known or not ascertained
Crimes of violence[a]						
Single offender						
Hispanic victims	100%	32%	36%	29%		3%
White	100	29	36	32		2
Black	100	28	36	32		3
Two or more offenders						
Hispanic victims	100	43	15	6	28	9
White	100	41	17	6	28	8
Black	100	39	15	7	28	11
Robbery						
Single offender						
Hispanic victims	100%	44%	33%	17%		6%
White	100	33	42	21		3
Black	100	33	39	20		8
Two or more offenders						
Hispanic victims	100	43	18	4	25	9
White	100	40	19	6	25	10
Black	100	40	15	7	25	12
Aggravated assault						
Single offender						
Hispanic victims[b]	100%	26%	41%	32%		1%
White	100	26	37	35		3
Black	100	25	35	39		2
Two or more offenders						
Hispanic victims	100	39	11	6	33	11
White	100	36	17	7	33	7
Black	100	29	14	8	34	14
Simple assault						
Single offender						
Hispanic victims	100%	32%	34%	31%		3%
White	100	30	35	33		2
Black	100	30	36	32		3
Two or more offenders						
Hispanic victims	100	48	15	7	24	5
White	100	46	16	6	26	6
Black	100	46	16	4	26	8

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

[a]Include data on rape not shown as a separate category.

[b]The estimate for "not known or not ascertained" is based on 10 or fewer sample cases; see *Methodology*.

Table 18. Ages of victims and offenders in violent crime victimizations, 1979-86

Age and race or ethnicity of victim	Perceived age of offenders: Total	Under 21	21-29	30 or over	Mixed ages	Not known or not ascertained	Number of offenders unknown
Crimes of violence							
Age under 21							
Hispanic	100%	62%	16%	8%	9%	3%	1%
White	100	61	19	10	6	3	1
Black	100	60	18	10	7	5	1
Age 21-29							
Hispanic	100	21	38	21	14	4	1 *
White	100	17	45	25	9	3	1
Black	100	13	48	23	10	5	1
Age 30 or over							
Hispanic	100	21	27	30	11	9	2
White	100	18	28	40	7	5	3
Black	100	17	22	40	10	9	2

Note: Detail may not total 100% because of rounding.

*Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases; see *Methodology*.

Methodology

The NCS collects data on crime from a nationally representative sample of households. When a household is selected for inclusion in the sample, household members age 12 or older are interviewed every 6 months for 3 years. During each interview information is obtained about the personal victimizations, if any, experienced by the interviewee in the 6 months preceding the interview. One member, generally over age 18, is also designated the household respondent, from whom information is obtained about all crimes committed against the household during the preceding 6 months.

The NCS measures both attempted and completed incidents of rape, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault; personal thefts with and without contact; and the household crimes of burglary, household larceny, and motor vehicle theft. In 1986 approximately 100,000 persons were interviewed in about 50,000 households.

In this report the Hispanic category includes all individuals of the following Spanish origins regardless of racial identity: Mexican-American, Chicano, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban Central or South American, and any other Spanish origin. Non-Hispanics are individuals of any origin not listed above, including respondents for whom origin is not known or not ascertained.

Series crimes are three or more similar incidents that a victim cannot describe in detail separately. Series crimes are included in this report and counted as one victimization. The characteristics of the victimization are those of the most recent event in the series.

Estimation procedures

An incident is a specific criminal act involving one or more victims, while a victimization refers to the criminal act as it affects a single victim. Therefore, because personal crimes may have more than one victim, the number of victimizations is determined by the number of victims of the crime. With respect to household crimes, a household is the sole victim of that crime. Thus, in this report, data covering the period 1979-86 have been victim-weighted, using standard NCS weighting procedures, to obtain the national estimates presented. For a more detailed description of NCS estimation procedures, see appendix III of *Criminal victimization in the United States, 1987* (NCJ-115524).

Reliability of comparisons

All comparisons made in this report were tested to determine whether the differences between groups were statistically significant. The comparisons are significant at the 90% confidence level; most are also significant at the 95% confidence level. Statistical significance at the 95% confidence level requires that the estimated difference between the values being compared is greater than twice the standard error of this difference.

Tables note when estimates are based on 10 or fewer sample cases; standard errors cannot be computed accurately for such estimates. It is particularly inadvisable to compare these with other estimates based on a small sample size.

Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Reports are prepared principally by BJS staff. This report was written by Lisa D. Bastian. Catherine J. Whitaker and Ida Hines provided statistical assistance. Thomas Hester edited the report. Marilyn Marbrook administered publication, assisted by Yvonne Boston, Tina Dorsey, and Jayne Pugh.

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